

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 02482 221256Z

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7354

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 2482

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY FROM MURPHY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, US

SUBJECT: LEBANON

1. WHILE DAOUDI MAY HAVE BEEN RIGHT IN EXPRESSING HIS OPINION APRIL 18 THAT ASAD'S REJECTION OF ANY ULTIMATUMS CONCERNING LEBANON WAS DIRECTED AT THE ISRAELIS RATHER THAN AT US, I CONSIDER THAT MESSAGE MARKED THE LOWEST POINT TO DATE IN OUR DIALOGUE WITH ASAD CONCERNING LEBANON (DAMASCUS 2374).

2. ADMITTEDLY, ASAD WAS CORDIAL IN HIS RECEPTION OF SENATORS MATHIAS, ABOUREZK AND EAGLETON EARLIER ON APRIL 18 AND THE DAY AFTER OF SENATOR JAVITS. BUT THOSE MEETINGS PER SE REFLECTED NO REKINDLING OF SYRIAN CONFIDENCE EITHER ABOUT OUR ROLE IN LEBANESE CRISIS OR EXPECTATION OF POSITIVE U.S. ACTION IN THE OVERALL PEACE PROCESS.

3. SINCE AFTER ALL OUR EFFORTS IN THE LEBANESE CRISIS, WE SHOULD COME OUT HAVING WON SOME CREDIT WITH SYRIA, I WOULD LIKE TO REPEAT MY SUGGESTION THAT WE BE MORE FORTHCOMING WITH ASAD ABOUT DEAN BROWN'S CONVERSATIONS WITH JUMBLATT. OUR BRIEFING ABOUT BROWN'S TALKS WITH THE MARONITES PROBABLY ADDED LITTLE ABOUT THEIR ATTITUDES OF WHICH THE PRESIDENT WAS NOT ALREADY AWARE BUT SYRIANS HAVE ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION INDICATED THEIR INTEREST IN OUR MEETINGS WITH JUMBLATT. I

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SEE THAT YOU HAVE TODAY INSTRUCTED DEAN TO RETURN TO JUMBLATT

(STATE 97586) AND I RECOMMEND I BE AUTHORIZED TO SHARE THE CONTENT OF BORN'S NEXT MEETING WITH JUMBLATT AND SUMMARIZE HIS PAST CONTACTS.

4. ASAD HAS CONTINUED TO BE TOTALLY PREOCCUPIED WITH THE LEBANESE CRISIS AND I HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THE TIME YET PROPITIOUS TO RECOMMEND TO YOU THAT I SEEK APPOINTMENT TO DELIVER MY TALKING POINTS ON THE PEACE PROCESS. HAVING SOME DETAIL TO SHARE WITH ASAD ABOUT OUR CONTACTS WITH JUMBLATT COULD PREPARE THE GROUND FOR A MORE WIDE RANGING DISCUSSION OF THE PEACE PROCESS. I COULD LEAD OFF WITH A MESSAGE FROM YOU CONCERNING OUR EFFORTS WITH JUMBLATT AND THEN EITHER FOLLOW IT UP IN THE SAME SESSION WITH OUR POINTS ON THE PEACE PROCESS OR AT LEAST REMIND HIM I WOULD LIKE EARLY MEETING TO DO SO. I AM CONCERNED THAT WITH THE IMMINENT ARRIVAL HERE OF ZEID RAFAI (AMMAN 2153) WHO WILL APPARENTLY BE RELAYING A PESSIMISTIC PERSPECTIVE ABOUT U.S. ENERGIES REGARDING THE PEACE PROCESS, ASAD WILL BE INCREASINGLY UN-RECEPTIVE TO YOUR EVENTUAL PRESENTATION.
MURPHY

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